

# Guardian

Volume 11, Issue 4

Produced for Personnel of KFOR Multi-National Brigade (East)

October 20, 2004

## **VETCAP**

*Local vets, Soldiers  
help farmers &  
livestock*

***Virtual  
Weapons  
Training***

***Youth visit  
Camp Monteith***

# Chaplain's Retreat



For those of you who are interested in going on the spiritual retreat to Greece, the required eight hours of classroom instruction are being offered again on the dates given below for Camps Bondsteel and Montieth.

The retreat will take Soldiers to places visited by the Apostle Paul. Questions should be submitted to your Chaplain's office. The same classes will be offered two times daily at 1000-1200 and 1900-2100.

## CAMP BONDSTEEL

Sessions 5 and 6  
Sessions 7 and 8  
Sessions 1 and 2 (from 1000-1200)  
Sessions 3 and 4 (from 1000-1200)  
Sessions 5 and 6 (from 1000-1200)  
Sessions 7 and 8 (from 1000-1200)

## SOUTH CHAPEL

21 October  
28 October  
16 October  
23 October  
6 November  
13 November

## NORTH CHAPEL

26 October  
2 November

Any needed sessions can also be taken at the North Chapel on Saturdays from 1000-1200.

## CAMP MONTEITH

Sessions 1 and 2  
Sessions 3 and 4  
Sessions 5 and 6  
Sessions 7 and 8

Monday  
Thursday  
Saturday  
Sunday

2000-2200  
2000-2200  
1300-1500  
1400-1600

This message brought to by the Task Force Falcon Chaplain's Office



# Contents

GUARDIAN MAGAZINE • VOLUME XI, NUMBER 4  
October 20th, 2004

## Departments

- 4 **Leader's Notes**  
*by Command Sgt. Maj. Terry Dillon*
- 5 **QuickTime**
- 6 **Around MNB(E)**  
Greek battallion TOA
- 7 **Off Duty**  
Halloween festivities  
*by Spc. Ian Blake*
- 8 **I am the Army**  
CSM Jones speaks out  
*by Sgt. Benjamin Hokkanen*
- 10 **Gear & Gadgets**  
Battle of the game consoles  
*by Spc. Adam Dielschneider and Spc. Ian Blake*
- 11 **Fitness & Health**  
Get your shut-eye  
*by Spc. Adam Dielschneider*
- 22 **Faith & Community**  
Holy month for Muslims  
*by Drita Perezic*
- 24 **Parting Shots**



PHOTO BY SGT. GREIG DAHLKE



PHOTO BY SGT. STEPHEN GROVES

- 12 **KFOR Vets**  
Soldiers help local livestock  
*by Sgt. 1st Class Bill Brockberg*
- 14 **Virtual Training**  
Weapon sims train Soldiers  
*by Spc. Ian Blake*
- 15 **Lancer night patrol**  
Soldiers visit town of Marina  
*by Staff Sgt. Tomas Rofkahr*
- 16 **Kids visit Monteith**  
Soldiers teach equality, fairness  
*by Sgt. 1st Class Bill Brockberg*
- 18 **Bondsteel fieldtrip**  
Local children see the sights  
*by Spc. Ian Blake*
- 20 **Czech Sports Day**  
Nations compete in day of fun  
*by Sgt. Greig Dahlke*

### On the Cover:

Col. Grover Ritchie works with local cattle.

## Fall driving requires caution

On Oct. 4, Gen. B. B. Bell sent out a safety letter covering fall and winter safety. Here in Kosovo, we have many of the same safety issues that we have in the United States or Europe; we also have a great number of additional safety concerns.

One of the first things we must look at here are the roads and road systems. In some cases, we have Soldiers on roads that aren't really roads at all, but logging and farm implement trails. The trails can have sharp turns with blind spots that don't allow you to see oncoming traffic.

The roads, trails and pathways are the only places that the local population has to walk. As most of you know, the youngest children in every village can be found walking in the street here. This is not New York, Indianapolis, or Columbus, Ohio – this is Kosovo. We have been sent here to keep this land safe and secure. If we were to have an accident involving injury to a child or citizen of Kosovo, our mission would not be a complete success.

I have seen drivers upset with local citizens because pedestrians were walking in the road. It's their road; we are just guests in this land. At no time should any Soldier be in such a hurry that he or she cannot wait on slow moving traffic or Kosovo citizens using their roadways. Backwards planning is the key to success in any mission, and driving from point A to point B is one of our missions.

This is harvest season with full-sized tractors, small two-wheeled garden tractors and even horses pulling wagons or carts on trails and on the roadways. The operators of such equipment may not hear you due to the noise of the equipment, or may be preoccupied attempting to control

their load.

Many of us have come from farming communities and are used to seeing this type of farm equipment on the roads at this time of year. On the other hand, some Soldiers are young or from larger cities, and have not experienced this type of traffic. Here in Kosovo, even those of us from farming communities have seen things on the roads and small streets of villages that we are not used to, and this causes a concern.

The upcoming winter months will bring ice, snow, freezing rain, early nightfall, fog, and dark, gloomy days. We will see even more citizens and children in the roadway. Your vehicle will need to have a clean windshield, headlights and taillights at all times. Each year we must remember and relearn the lessons we learned in winters past. Just take your time and drive safely.

I have the privilege of being the command sergeant major of Task Force Falcon. I have the privilege of working with the best Soldiers from Greece, Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania and the United States.

This mission, the mission's safety record, and the safety of each and every Soldier in this task force is extremely important to me. I want every one of our great Soldiers to go home safe after this mission. I need your help to accomplish that.

General Carmony and I are extremely proud of you. Thanks, and keep up the good work.



*Command Sgt. Major Terry Dillon is command sergeant major for Task Force Falcon and can be reached at Terry.Dillon@bondsteel2.aur.army.mil*

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# Quicktime

## Mortuary Affairs Trains at Bondsteel

The Task Force Falcon (TFF) G4 section, in coordination with the 21st Theater Support Command (TSC) from Germany, conducted mortuary affairs training Sept. 21 at Camp Bondsteel. The training began with a presentation on mortuary affairs conduct and procedures, then ended with hands-on training.

Maj. William Stratton, supply and service officer for the G4 section, is the officer in charge of mortuary affairs. "We ensure that the human remains are taken care of in a respectful manner and evacuated from the area in a timely manner," Stratton said.

The training, led by Soldiers from the 21st TSC and Stratton, covered topics like how to handle and transport human remains, how to preserve them, and how to keep them secure until they are flown out of the area.

Property accountability is a major part of the processing

the mortuary affairs Soldiers must perform on the remains, said Stratton.

TFF does not have mortuary affairs personnel assigned to it, which is why the training was necessary. The mortuary affairs training staff chose Soldiers that felt comfortable performing the tasks that would be required of them, said Stratton.

In the event that emergency personnel bring human remains to Camp Bondsteel, the newly trained Soldiers would first process the remains and store them at the local mortuary affairs collection point. Once they complete the preliminary paperwork, G4 arranges for air transportation to Germany, where the remains are prepared for burial. Finally, the TFF chaplains and command sergeant major help with the various ceremonies involved with transporting the remains.

## *TF Falcon Soldiers aid in bridge testing*

Soldiers from Task Force Falcon G3 assisted in a live load test of three bridges between Urosevac/Ferizaj and Prishtina/Pristina. The bridges, funded by the European Agency for Reconstruction and KFOR were added to the roads to "allow freedom of movement," said Maj. Dean Ervin, G3 Engineers.

A live load is a test for roads and bridges that calculates the weight per axel of the vehicles that would cross the bridge.

The live load, which utilized a tank recovery vehicle strapped to the bed of a trailer, was used to provide the maximum amount of weight the bridge could take, as well as to measure the amount of flex given by the bridge. "If something doesn't flex, it breaks," Ervin said, adding, "These bridges will last for years." A French construction company, named Freyssinet, was responsible for constructing the bridges.

(Left) Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan Beauchamp and Spc. James Heaton pose for pictures in a tank recovery vehicle during a live load of a bridge. The European Agency for Reconstruction funded the construction of three bridges. (Upper Right) Soldiers from Task Force Falcon assist in a "live-load" test of a bridge between Freizaj/Urosevac and Pristina/Prishtina. The bridges were built to allow greater freedom of movement for the people of Kosovo.



PHOTO BY SPC. IAN BLAKE



PHOTO BY SPC. IAN BLAKE

## G6 ISC provides support

The Task Force Falcon G6 Information Support Center (ISC) provides world-wide fax capabilities, assistance with records preservation procedures, large quantity reproduction capability, color copier or color print capability, and assistance in establishing publication accounts.

The ISC operates from 0700 to 1900 Monday through Saturday, and 0800 through 1700 Sunday in Building 500, Room 505 in the Tactical Operation Center. They can be contacted at DSN phone (314) 781-6603, DSN fax lines (314) 781-6604 and (314) 781-4473, and by email at G6ISC@bondsteel2.areur.army.mil.



By Spc. Adam Dielschneider

## Greek battalion transfers authority

On Oct. 13, the Greek 525th Mechanized Infantry Battalion transferred their authority in MNB(E) to the 506th Mechanized Infantry Battalion. This transfer of authority was initiated at a ceremony on Camp Rigas Fereos near Camp Bondsteel.

This ended a 7-month rotation for the 525th and signaled the beginning of the 506th's second Kosovo rotation, said Maj. Ioannis Kouridakis, executive officer for the 506th. This battalion served in Kosovo last year during a different 7-month rotation, from Aug. 25, 2003 to March 15, 2004.

Kouridakis is confident that the unit will continue to perform their duties with the same skill as before. Since 75 percent of the Soldiers in the unit were here for the last rotation, they are already familiar with the mission and can reestablish the contacts they made last year, said Kouridakis.

The 525th had to restore order and peace after the March riots, and this was not an easy job, said Kouridakis. But they managed to maintain the area of operations well enough that the transition back to the 506th went smoothly. "I would like to congratulate the officers and NCOs of the 525th for their great job in the area," said Kouridakis.

(Below) Brig. Gen. Tod Carmony, Task Force Falcon commander, presents a commemorative flag display to Lt. Col. Kiriakos Kontogiannis, commander of the 525th Mech. Inf. Battalion.



PHOTO BY SPC. ADAM DIELSCHNEIDER

(Above) Lt. Col. Georgios Killinis, 506th Mech. Inf. Battalion commander, gives a speech during the Greek transfer-of-authority ceremony.



PHOTO BY SPC. ADAM DIELSCHNEIDER

# Local Halloween Treat for Soldiers



PHOTO BY SPC. IAN BLAKE

*Festive weekend filled with races, fun and traditions. MWR sponsors both a 5k run and a costume contest.*

Getting into the festive spirit of the season, Spc. Lea Peterson, HHC 37th BCT, strings up Halloween garland. Halloween is being celebrated on Camp Bondsteel with MWR-sponsored 5K races and Halloween games.

Well, the time for supernatural merrymaking will soon be here, and there will be opportunities for fun for the Soldiers here at Task Force Falcon.

And, depending on the time you decide to do it, going from barracks to barracks doing trick-or-treating may result in more tricks than treats.

This year Halloween falls on a Sunday, so the weekend will be filled with activities.

MWR is sponsoring a 5-kilometer fun run on Oct. 31 starting in Southtown Camp Bondsteel.

There are five categories for the runners based on age: up to 20, 21 to 29, 30 to 39, 40 to 45, and 46 and over.

T-shirts are given to the first 300 people who finish, and prizes are awarded to the first, second, and third-place winner in each category.

Pre-registration begins next Wednesday, at the Southtown fitness center.

MWR is also holding a masquerade party on Halloween night at the Southtown fitness center.

The festivities include a haunted house, trick-or-treating, and Monster ball casino games.

There'll also be a number of different contests including pumpkin carving, pumpkin-pie eating, best costumes, and best make-up, with prizes for the winner.

The Halloween activities can at times pale in comparison to the traditions and activities Soldiers do back at home, on both an emotional and sentimental level.

Whether it was an enjoyable night taking the kids out for their first trick-or-treating, or remembering the night they scored the "mother load," the holi-

day has its share of fun.

"My usual tradition is getting the kids dressed up and taking them trick-or-treating. Nothing really special," said Spc. Robert Clubbs, Multinational Brigade (East) Command Section.

When all is said and done, Halloween may not be as special as Thanksgiving or Christmas, but given our current location, it's certainly a day that deserves celebrating.

Any break from your usual routines, no matter what it is, should be taken full advantage of.

So get into the Halloween spirit, and try to scare up some fun! ☒



*Spc. Ian Blake is a member of the 364th MPAD and can be reached at [ian.blake@bondsteel2.areur.army.mil](mailto:ian.blake@bondsteel2.areur.army.mil)*

# What Makes the Army: Soldiers

*What does it take to become command sergeant major of the Army Reserve? Holding every key position possible for a non-commissioned officer can hold—squad leader, platoon sergeant, first sergeant, and command sergeant major—one would think that there was nothing left for one to accomplish. But for Command Sergeant Major Michele S. Jones, there was one level left to achieve. On Oct. 28, 2002, she became command sergeant major of the Army Reserve, principal enlisted advisor to the chief of the Army Reserve.*



PHOTO BY SGT. STEPHEN GROVES

## Why did you join the Army?

Initially, I liked the uniform. The second piece is that I've always been an independent thinker, and none of my friends were going into the military. I graduated from high school and went right into college. I knew I wasn't ready for college at that time, but I knew that I wanted to complete a four-year degree; I wanted to do something different. The slogan of the Army, "Be all that you can be," just kept saying, "Michele, be all that you can be."

I wanted to travel. I wanted to join the military and be a part of that world. I was in Active component first. It was a good structured experience—in other words I got more experience in the military and understood it at the basic level after being in the Active component.

That gave me my foundation for where I am now. I knew I wanted more diversity in my career, and that's when I came upon my ETS date and decided that I wanted to stay in, but I wanted to be a different type of Soldier. I wanted more variety, more diversity, more opportunities, and I saw more opportunities in the Reserve component than I saw in the Active component.

At what point in your career did you realize you could become the command

## sergeant major of the Army Reserve?

The day I was actually selected. Every opportunity I was eligible for promotion I did what I was required: submitted a packet.

I had done not just the required schools, but I had done so much more. More importantly, Soldiers that I worked always accomplished the mission. If I just happened to be the responsible party, like the NCOIC or first sergeant, yes, that was reflected on my NCOERs.

When it became an individual base, like attending school classes, I always did what I had to do. Not just the minimum, not just being good, but also being exceptionally good.

I knew the promotions were going to come, but I never looked at it thinking, "Let me do this to get promoted."

When I was promoted to sergeant major, and subsequently laterally appointed to command sergeant major, it was wonderful. Then I could really affect change. Then when the position became available, I had some personal things that I needed to iron-out first to even think about being considered.

When the packet went forward, and I received the first phone call stating that I was selected from the panel

to be interviewed by the chief of the Army Reserve, I said, "This was a great learning experience to go through this process. I'll have this for the future." When I actually received the phone call, I thought he was going to say that he had selected someone else. When he actually said, "I've selected you as the next command sergeant major of the Army Reserve," that's when I knew. It was a great feeling to know that the chief of the Army Reserve, out of all the command sergeants major out there that competed, thought I was the one to represent the enlisted force.

That is an awesome testimony to what someone believes in you as a professional. That day, that's when I thought it was possible quite frankly.

## What has been the highlight of your career, besides becoming command sergeant major of the Army Reserve?

Two things. Going to Airborne School. It actually set my mind in a certain frame of reference—it is not a very natural order of things to jump out of, walk out of, and push yourself out of, an aircraft. It is a testimony to your ability to control a fear and be able to conquer it. To be able to control and conquer a fear bled over into everything that I do. When I meet a challenge I think to



myself, "If you can jump out of a plane or push yourself out a helicopter, there's nothing that you cannot do." That has become my professional motivation.

On a leader's basis, the highlight to me is when I run into former Soldiers on my team that have taken the experiences of that team and have progressed up the ladder in terms of promotions and increased responsibility. They are funneling that out to other Soldiers and expanding exponentially how we should live. Or to be in this position and to do something for a Soldier, not because I want to, but because it's the right thing to do, and it comes together.

**What's been your best or favorite experience you've had since getting this position?**

There have been so many. One of them was when I visited a mob-site at Fort Dix, and I told the Soldiers that I would see them in theater, see them in Iraq. When I landed in Iraq, the first stop we made I hit the latrine, and there was a group of Soldiers near the latrines. I walked by them and I heard them say, "Soldiers' skills first, sergeant major!" I turned and I looked and saw that it was a large piece of the Soldiers that I had met before they had mobilized. It really brought tears to my eyes. First, it showed that they had listened to me. Second, it showed that they were in theater. And third, the fact that they remembered me and those words. They said them with such pride and conviction; it was a great day to see that.

The other one is when I go to Walter Reed Army Medical Center and talk with the Soldiers who have been seriously injured. No matter what, just about every one of them tells me that they want to go back and be with their fellow Soldiers. You just don't get that in any other profession, that kind of commitment to each other. They may be missing an eye or a limb, but they still want to go. It's phenomenal. And to be part of that organization that breeds that kind of camaraderie is just awesome. It really is.

**What advice can you offer Soldiers to cope with the deployment?**

On the home piece, you're going to miss your family and they are going to miss you. I would say, quite frankly, to minimize the negativity in whatever's going on in your deployed world.

The reason being, family members want to do something about it. But in a lot of cases, it increases the anxiety level of the loved one because they cannot do anything. I'm not saying to not tell them the truth, or withhold all information, but its in the way that you say what's going on to your family. The more you are distressed, the more you increase your family's level of anxiety.

The second piece is that the more positive you are, the more positive they are. In some cases, it may not always work, but you always pull out the positive.

For example, if you're here in Kosovo,

**Name:** Michele S. Jones  
**Title:** Command Sgt. Maj.  
of the Army Reserve  
**Date of Birth:** Nov. 24, 1963  
**Hometown:** Baltimore, Md.  
**MOS:** 00Z (38A, 79D, 27D)  
**Hobbies:** Travel, skiing, Tae-Bo

one way of looking at it is to think you could instead be in Iraq or Afghanistan, or be back home knowing that you are going, or not even knowing. There's always a positive spin that you can put on anything that you do.

**What is the most important thing you wish to accomplish, that you haven't accomplished, as command sergeant major of the Army Reserve?**

To elevate the Army Reserve in everything. From leadership opportunities to training opportunities. There were three main things: getting rid of the commissary card, extending Tri-Care to all Soldiers serving in the military, and retirement.

The first was accomplished. The commissary card is out the door.

The second piece is quasi-accomplished. Congress has authorized us to have it, but they haven't given us the dollars. We're half-way there, because money's always a big piece.

And the third piece is retirement. They're talking about age 55. That's good if they give it to us, but our service should be based on just that—service, not age.

I've taken them on constantly, always bringing those issues forward. As we continue to elevate the Army Reserve, we create a better understanding of what we do. What we bring to the table the Active Component cannot replicate because of cost, time, and resources that the Active Component doesn't have. This shows the value of the Army Reserve and create a strong desire to support the benefits and entitlements that we should get as members of the Army, period.

That is a constant thing, and I'll keep doing it until it kills me.

**As NCOs, what's the most important thing we'll be dealing within the next five years?**

Leadership. I say that because leadership, in general, has not been the highest area of concentration in the Reserve Component.

What I mean is that our leadership has been geared towards, "What do we have to do drill weekend? What do we have to do at AT?" What do leaders have to do? Take ownership of what you are as a leader.

It's no longer, "I'm just going to show up." If you are a leader, it's expected to put in more time and more effort to take care of Soldiers, period.

So leadership, and pushing that, so we can take better care of Soldiers. And being a good leader is making sure that people get paid and all those things, but also its ensuring that you voice that

Soldiers below or within your element are trained properly, given the time to train. ★

## PS2 vs X-Box: Get Your Game On



*Top game systems compared. Guardian writers present biased viewpoints.*



The two top contenders for best video game system are the PlayStation 2 (left) and the Xbox (right).

Throughout all of history, there have been many great rivalries. David vs. Goliath, Good vs. Evil. But those aren't an immediate concern to the Soldiers of Task Force Falcon. One local debate is the battle between the Sony PlayStation 2 and the Microsoft Xbox.

Why the debate? What is this all about? Our readers who have been involved in the video game world for a while may remember the days of Mario Bros. on the original Nintendo, or maybe even Pong on the old Atari systems. But over the years, these kinds of systems, commonly referred to as video game systems or game consoles, have evolved into highly realistic, considerably more complex, entertainment systems.

The days of blocky graphics and eight-button controllers are gone. Modern consoles, like the Xbox and PlayStation 2 (PS2), sport smooth, three-dimensional graphics, surround-sound support, and advanced game controllers. These systems still differ from computers in that they require a TV to operate, but the gap between computers and consoles is growing smaller with each generation.

In case you didn't know, your local Post Exchange (PX) carries the hardware and games for both of these

systems. The consoles may be hard to come by at times, but they are also available through most on-line retailers, such as Amazon.com and Gamestop.com. The wide variety of games available for purchase at the PX illustrates the diversity of titles available for both systems.

The number of game titles for these systems is somewhere in the hundreds, and they are generally divided into the major categories of action, strategy, role-playing, and sports. The sports category has become very attractive to people who are normally not very interested in video games, because they have become more realistic and easy to learn. The most popular sports title on both systems is John Madden Football. The successive titles have sold thousands of units due to its easy game play, welcoming challenge, and its "party game" atmosphere—making it the perfect game for gathering your fellow Soldiers at the hooch for a night of gaming action.

Each of these two systems has developed a host of followers, each group adamantly defending the advantages of "their" system. For this article, two writers from our staff go head to head to uphold their console preferences. Spc. Ian Blake is a long-time follower

of Sony's systems, while Spc. Adam Dielschneider is a two-year Xbox fan. Let's see what they have to say.

Dielschneider: I've been playing games on my computer for years, but the first time I got my hands on an Xbox a couple years ago, I was hooked. Modern consoles really are starting to surpass computers for gaming purposes. But Blake, I hear that you are a PS2 fan.

Blake: Yes, I am, so let me get straight to the point. The basic PS2 works as both a game console and a DVD player, doubling the usefulness of the product.

Dielschneider: Fortunately, the Xbox also doubles as a DVD player, though to use it you must buy an accessory kit, so I guess you beat me there. Oh, but what's this? The Xbox has a built-in, 8-gigabyte hard drive? Surely it can't be! No need for dozens of memory cards lying around, though the Xbox can use those too. The hard drive gives you tons of space to store saved games, game data, and even music files.

Blake: But what if you want to take data from a game and bring it over to a friend's house? The Xbox memory

*See GEAR, page 23*



PHOTO BY SPC. IAN BLAKE

## Sleep Affects More Than the Mind

One of the keys to quality sleep is a dark, quiet place to relax.

So you're driving your Hummer late at night, returning from a long day in the field. Slowly, your eyelids become heavy, and each time you "blink" the road isn't quite where you expected it to be. Of course, you know it's your own fault—you stayed up late the night before playing some wild games of Bingo at the MWR center.

I'm sure we've all experienced the debilitating effects of sleep deprivation in one form or another. Sleep is a strange thing indeed—scientists are still trying to get a handle on what exactly happens during sleep. Some theories are that the human body gathers new energy for the next day, or that the body's cells are rejuvenated to slow

the aging process. But despite all these theories, scientists know more about sleep deprivation than sleep itself.

What scientists do know is that sleep is essential for our survival. You've probably heard the figures about how many days we can go without food and water, how many minutes without air, and so forth. In terms of sleep, a human being can only go about three days without sleep before severe psychosis and death results. Gee, I guess sleep is important.

Even more interesting is the fact that adults need an average of 8 hours of sleep every night, but some need as little as 4 or as many as 10. To find out how many hours you need, go to bed on

a night that you feel a normal level of tiredness and wake up as soon as your body feels rested. Once you find your ideal sleep duration, keep this fact in mind: getting one hour less sleep per night for 8 nights will make you feel like you've pulled an all-nighter. In other words, every hour of sleep you lose will eventually come back to haunt you later, and you'll have to make it up somehow.

Numerous websites have been developed by groups who study sleep and have come up with tips to help you sleep better. The one recurring theme seems to be consistency—go to bed around the same time each night, and wake up about the same time every morning. When your body gets used to a regular sleep schedule, you are more likely to feel tired when you need to go to bed and wide awake when you need to get up. Being consistent maximizes the quality of your sleep.

One problem some people have around bedtime is an overactive brain. If you just came back from a mentally-stimulating activity, like playing action-packed video games or really intense homework, your brain can continue working at a fast pace for quite some time, preventing you from falling asleep right away. It sometimes helps in these situations to come up with a regular nighttime activity that calms you down, such as reading a book or lis-

### Deprivation Causes Problems to Add Up

Sleep deprivation is a dangerous thing indeed. Though it may seem harmless, though undeniably unpleasant to experience, it can lead to some pretty serious problems, like death.

The symptoms of sleep deprivation gradually increase in severity as you go longer and longer without sleep. The most immediate and noticeable effects are sleepiness, reduced mental acuity and slowed reaction time. Studies have also shown that losing just four hours of sleep in one night can have a considerable effect on your immune system, making you more susceptible to illness.

Go even longer without sleep and you can start seeing things. These hallucinations are essentially waking dreams that your brain experiences even though you may think you are entirely awake. After another day or so, not only will you be extremely grumpy, but you can start to experience mild psychotic episodes as your brain functions begin to deteriorate. This can progress to more severe psychosis and eventually death.

So you see, sleep deprivation is not a matter to be taken lightly.

*See SLEEP, page 23*





PHOTO BY SGT. 1ST CLASS BILL BROCKBERG

(Top) 1st Lt. Gwendolyn Ziolkowski works with Bashkim Ibrahim to feed nutrient supplements to local livestock. (Above and Above Right) Col. Grover Ritchie works with local cattle. (Right) A local farmer waits to get his horse treated.

*Story by Bill Brockberg*

## Locals, KFOR help the hoofed

In many economically depressed areas of Kosovo, thousands of people live in villages away from towns and cities. Their survival and livelihood relies on what little farmland and livestock they possess. The health and well-being of the farm animals is a major concern for these farmers.

In situations like this, the farmers often cannot get the proper care for their livestock because there is no money or community support to pay for vaccines, feed supplements and de-worming medication.

To help these villagers, KFOR conducts Veterinary Civil Assistance Programs called VETCAPS. Col. Grover C. Ritchie of the 422nd Veterinary Detachment recently conducted one of

several VETCAPs scheduled during this rotation. However, Ritchie brings to these missions much more than just his Veterinary Science degree and experience – he also brings the medicine, supplements and vaccines.

In his civilian occupation, Ritchie consults in the learning and development division of Novartis Veterinary and Pharmaceutical Company. To support Ritchie, Novartis donated vaccines, feed supplements and de-wormer, so he and his technicians could treat more farmers' livestock.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture in Gnjilane, Ritchie, and Spc. Akinbola Ajayi-obe, a veterinary technician assistant also with the 422nd Veterinary Detachment, conducted





PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. AARON SALZER



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. AARON SALZER

VETCAPs for farmers in the area of Pones. Completing this VETCAP team were civil veterinary technicians Bashkim Ibrahimi and Remzi Sylja from the Gnjilane Ministry of Agriculture.

The team of veterinary technicians began the day in a tiny village where two farmers had three cows lined up and tied to a fence waiting for the VETCAP care. As Ritchie, Ajayi-obe and the rest of the team went to work, more farmers brought in their livestock to the site.

To run an efficient VETCAP and be able to keep up with all the requests for support, requires additional manpower. Civil administration personnel kept track of which animals had been treated, as well as which had been given feed supplements or other items distributed from the team. In addition, the task force had its share of interpreters and patrol escort Soldiers too.

"These are the best days of our

deployment," said Ritchie. "We have good teamwork, and the people are appreciative."

To take full advantage of the teamwork and support personnel, Ritchie,



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. AARON SALZER

Ibrahimi and Sylja were asking the farmers, Soldiers and non-farming villagers to lend a hand. 1st Lt. Gwendolyn Ziolo of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 37th Brigade Combat Team, volunteered to feed nutrients to sheep.

Ajayi-obe was always nearby with the supply kits and de-worming harness,

and when he wasn't handing out vaccines to the technicians, he held cows or sheep to be treated.

"[The VETCAP] was very promising, especially in what we have achieved so far and what we wanted to achieve," Ajayi-obe said. The team caught up with the treatment for all the livestock at the first site, and then went on to a second, third and fourth site for a full day of VETCAP care administered to hundreds of livestock.

Ritchie, who has 25 years experience in the Army Reserve Veterinary Corps, has conducted VETCAPs or similar short missions like these in South America.

"There are a lot of responsibilities tied in with what we're doing here today," Ritchie said. "These VETCAPs are all about relationships. These animals are the farmers' livelihood. This may seem small to us, but it's big to them."

# Virtual training nets real results

*Story and photos by Spc. Ian Blake*

A Soldier takes his M9 pistol in his hand, sliding the magazine into the weapon, and then raises it up into a ready-to-fire position.

He scans the wooded area before him, searching for any sign of enemy movement. Suddenly, from behind a tree, an enemy combatant appears! The Soldier takes aim and fires, but the enemy keeps moving. Five more times the Soldier takes aim and fires, but there is no visible sign of the target being hit. A minute later the lights come on as the screen shows the score from the last scenario: four lethal hits and two non-lethal hits.

What the Soldier had just gone through was a virtual marksmanship training simulation, one of many offered at the Small Arms Virtual Training (SAVT) building.

The SAVT building, located in building 620B on Camp Bondsteel, is offering virtual training for the M9, M16, M249, MK19, and M2.

"The training consists of two hours," said Staff Sgt. Jesse Kyle, Task Force Lancer, who organized the training for Lancer. "The first hour is a review of classroom information. The second hour uses real-world scenarios."

The SAVT is set up with 10 firing lanes that support a variety of weapons. After connecting their personal weapons with sensors, the main computer keeps track of the accuracy of the shots.



Looking down a virtual hilltop, Soldiers from Task Force Lancer scan for simulated enemy combatants.

The Soldiers fire at a video screen that plays the scenarios. The system registers the shots the Soldiers make and displays them on screen. Consisting first of virtual footage in simulated field environments, the training gives Soldiers the "psychological boost," as Kyle put it, to help them fire at moving, human targets. Ranging from wooded areas and hilltop fortifications, to night-fire scenarios where the only light to shoot by is from lit flares, Soldiers are introduced to firing in different climates and terrains.

After simulated field environments, Soldiers are given 'real life' scenarios. The purpose behind these simulations,

besides building up the confidence and skills of the shooter, is to test their ability to know when not to fire. In one scenario, the shooter is part of a dismounted patrol and must deal with a bank robber. If the robber has a weapon, then the Soldiers shoot. If not and they shoot, the simulation ends. Soldiers were evaluated on not only their temperance with their weapons, but on how many fatal, non-fatal, and missed shots they take.

Interested Soldiers should talk with their training officer or NCO about taking part in this interactive marksmanship training. The following days are available for training, on the specified weapon system.

- M2 training: Oct 26th from 0900 to 1200 and Nov 23rd from 0900 to 1600.
- MK 19 training: Oct 26th from 1300 to 1600 and Nov 22nd from 1300 go 1600.
- M249 training: Nov 8th from 1300 to 1600.
- M16 training: Oct 28th and Nov 3rd from 1300 to 1600.
- M9 training: Nov 3rd from 0900 to 1200 and Nov 24th from 1300 to 1600.
- M16 and M9 combined training: Nov 6th and Nov 20th from 0900 to 1200.
- Dec 13th, 14th, and 15th are open for any training.



Soldiers from Task Force Lancer prepare to fire their M9 pistols at the screen at the Small Arms Virtual Training building at Camp Bondsteel.



# Night out with Lancer

*Story by Staff Sgt. Tomas Rofkahr*

The whole village is without power the night of Sept. 16, and the members of 3rd Squad, 2nd Platoon, Troop B, 2-107th Cavalry are gathered in the entryway of a newer house in the village of Marina. The only light comes from flashlights and a single flickering candle held by a young Kosovo girl standing next to her mother and her sisters.

In quiet and polite tones, Sgt. Edward J. Lizak, alpha team leader for 3rd squad, questions the woman. Lizak, almost apologetic at having intruded on this dark night, asks many of the same questions he's already posed to the woman's neighbors.

"How are you, what do you think of KFOR, are there any problems in your village?"

After phrasing each question, Lizak waits for his interpreter to relay it to the woman and then listens politely as she answers each query with an earnest and animated quality that transcends the language barrier.

Lizak and his men are part of a larger mission going on this night. Working outside the bounds of Multinational Brigade (East) and in coordination with the German Army, they are conducting a permissive cordon and search of Marina, a small town in the Drenica Valley of central Kosovo. According to Capt. Richard E. Davis, commander of Troop B, the intent this night is less about catching criminals in the act or finding caches of weapons than it is to convey a simple fact: We're KFOR, we're working jointly, out of our normal sectors of responsibility, and we're concerned about the safety and security of Marina's homes and families.

It has been some time since many of the residents of Marina have seen KFOR. According to one man questioned, as many as five years.

Other patrols move up and down the lanes of the village, many accompanied by local Kosovo Police Service (KPS) officers.

No weapons are found this night – the people of Marina are cooperative and seemingly surprised at the attention. The only point of concern comes when Lizak's team

– moving down the dark winding road towards another home – comes across a hasty roadblock that has been erected along the main avenue of approach into the village. The barrier is not large – simply a line of sizable building stones placed in a straight line across the road. Lizak and his men take action and begin to flag down oncoming traffic to warn them of the obstacle. Within moments they have radioed back to higher, reporting the roadblock. The KPS is contacted and the barrier removed.

The roadblock is ominous, particularly when combined with the gusting wind and the near total darkness shrouding the town.

With the entire village canvassed in only a few short hours, Bravo Troop assembles and prepares to move back



PHOTO BY SPC. IAN BLAKE

Lancer troops pause in their Humvees outside the village Marina prior to a patrol.

to camp. As they load into their HMMWVs the lights in Marina begin to come on – the wind begins to die down and the threat of a dark stormy night seems postponed.

For the members of Bravo Troop, the night has ended safely, free of conflict and without rain.

According to Davis, an important message has been communicated: regardless of the location, and regardless of the notional borders drawn between each multinational brigade, KFOR can and will act swiftly and jointly wherever and whenever needed.

# Locals ask for lessons in equality

Story and photos by  
Sgt. 1st Class Bill Brockberg



(Above and Below) Multi-ethnic students escorted by Task Force Shield Soldiers at Camp Monteith learned about equal opportunity and affirmative action.

*"We, the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union..."*

As Soldiers and American citizens, just that first part of the preamble to the U.S. Constitution is recognized and reminds Americans of what our government and culture are based upon.

Task Force Shield Soldiers saw how much is taken for granted by themselves and other Americans when they escorted Kosovo Albanian, Serbian, and Roma teenagers to Camp Monteith for an Organization for Security and Communication in Europe (OSCE) Youth Assembly.

"One of the students commented to me, 'this program was one of the high points of my life,'" said Lt. Col Gordon L. Ellis, TF Shield battalion commander, and the host for the event. "It seemed to me to be a unique proposal strictly from the fact that the U.S. labor law is not a topic that a lot of young

people want to focus on."

Soon after the students arrived at Camp Monteith they were mixed with students from other schools and ethnic backgrounds into groups of five, with one Soldier and interpreter for each group.

The students were seated in the field house and Capt. Brian A. Reali, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 37th Brigade Combat Team, and Ellis, began their discussions. The escort Soldiers were surprised to see the interest the students took in the discussion; some Soldiers commented on how much freedom and fairness we, as Americans, have.

"I think there a lot of things that we, as Americans, take for granted," Ellis said. "We understand and appreciate as part of our cultural norms some of the things I discussed, and that we have had in our labor laws for 20 to 25 years."

Reali, Camp Monteith Judge Advocate General officer, and an attorney in civilian life, began the program on equal employment law and affirmative-action rules, procedures and standards. Next, Ellis took five volunteer students to get up in front of everyone and apply for a make-believe city police officer position. Ellis is chief of police for Austintown, Ohio.

"In the big picture, it was important and valuable to bring these students together, talk to them, and have them talk and interact with each other for future cooperation," Reali said. "They are the ones who, in the near future, will have to apply for jobs, interact and cooperate with each other."

For Adhurim Shabani and Alban Kadriu, two of the visiting students, nothing was taken for granted. "[Bringing the different students together] was a brilliant idea, and it would be better if we could visit the camp again, all students, all of us together, to give us important lessons about the Army and America," said Kadriu.

Though the Soldiers may have viewed the program as a typical classroom lecture, the discussions piqued the interest and curiosity of the visiting students. "It was a very important and significant program, and I hope that this kind of program will help us for a better future," said Shabani. "Especially, it was





very important when the lawyer gave us some lessons."

The topics and discussions were new material for the visiting students. Initially, OSCE and a previous task force had set up these student visits to Camp Monteith. However, it was the cooperation between Diana Falloni, Democratization Officer for OSCE, and the TF Shield Civil Military Operations staff, led by Capt. Pedro J. Casiano, that finalized this most recent tour. Falloni worked with area schools to select students and arrange transportation to Camp Monteith. First Sgt. Gregory K. Durenberger of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-148th Infantry, was one of the staff non-commissioned officers assisting in completing the youth assembly.

"They do many trips, this is just one," Durenberger said. "It was brought up by the students to do this program. This is what they requested," he said, referring to the two topics, employment law and affirmative action.

Research assistance and communication between Falloni and Casiano led to having the classroom discussion included in the youth assembly visit.

The success of this youth assembly, which incorporated the classroom dis-

battalion commander would like to do another program, and this next time do more of a roundtable event and let the

"I would like to change the conditions for all ethnicities and to have more cultural and sports activities," Shabani



As soon as students arrived at Camp Monteith for the youth assembly, Soldiers mixed students into different ethnic and gender groups of five or less.

students make decisions," Durenberger said. "We're going to do another youth assembly in December."

What may have started out as an ordinary, routine school trip, has now taken off to include education and understanding of different issues in a multi-ethnic society.

The youth assembly and future visits can have long-range benefits. "We're looking here at teenagers, 17 to 19 years-old, who in just

a few years hence, will be the leaders of Kosovo," Ellis said. "Kosovo, to me, is at a critical juncture in its history."

said. "Also, more freedom of movement for minorities." Shabani's fellow student, Kadriu added, "I would change a lot of things if I was able to, and also, I would like to get along with everyone as best as I can."

Part of the success of the youth assembly was the deliberate mixing of the students. In each group of five, at least two schools were represented, and there was a mix of student groups based on ethnicity and gender. "The presentations were part of a bigger program to bring the students together," explained Reali. "The idea of Serbian and Albanian students sitting and talking together is part of a main progression."

"What we want to do is encourage and show these student success stories in multi-ethnic societies, and then have them come to that realization," Ellis said, "But that takes time, effort and focus to deliver messages, and to listen to their responses to those messages."

"What becomes and what will happen in the next couple of years will be driven by the desires and attitudes of that young generation."



Lt. Col. Gordon L. Ellis, Task Force Shield commander, interviews four volunteers for a hypothetical police officer position.

cussions into the routine student visit, has created an opportunity to do more youth assemblies than previously planned. "The





(Above) Britt, one of three German shepherds trained by the 35th MP Co. Canine Unit, Task Force Protector, returns to her trainer. The demonstration was part of a field trip for local children organized by Protector.

(Lower Right) Giving his dog a congratulatory scratch behind the ears, Sgt. Rodolfo Martinez watches the attack dog demonstration. The demonstration was to show local school children that the dogs could be trained for obedience and attack work.

(Far Upper Right) While playing the role of an assailant, Staff Sgt. Craig Montgomery tries to fend off Brit, a trained German shepherd during an attack dog demonstration.

(Far Lower Right) After showing how fierce he can be, Robbie, a trained German shepherd allows himself to be petted by a local student.

*Photos by Sgt. Stephen Groves  
Story by Spc. Ian Blake*

# Protector shows kids

A school bus is filled with a mixture of languages from the load of school children aboard. Before them is a hilly road covered with cement roadblocks and metal barriers. The driver of the bus stops before the first metal barrier, presents a pass to the security guard, and points to the Soldier waiting to escort them on base. The bus is then let through the barrier and it begins to wind its way through the gate to the fire station. When their bus comes to a stop at the aluminum building, the children file out.

Thirty school children from Vitina/Viti, 21 Kosovo Albanians and nine Kosovo Serbians, were treated to a tour of Camp Bondsteel to see how the fire-fighters, military police, and emergency

medical personnel work. The students, ranging from the fifth grade to the ninth grade, were chosen to participate in the event because they are in the top 10 percent of their respective classes.

The event, organized by Task Force Protector, Kosovo Police Service (KPS), and United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), brought students on base with one of their teachers and their principal for a morning of fun and education.

"The message we want the kids to gain from this event is that hard work pays off," said 2nd Lt. Daniel Weidner, 35th Military Police (MP) Company and organizer of the event.

The first stop for the students was the Camp Bondsteel fire station. There



# the ropes

they were shown the variety of equipment used by the firefighters in their job, including exhaust fans, power saws, and inflatable cushions. The presentation ended with the kids seeing how powerful the fire truck's two water cannons were with an exhibition that left the kids wide-eyed.

After piling back into their gray bus, the kids were taken behind the hospital to the helipad, where a Black Hawk helicopter stood ready to be looked over. Personnel from Task Forces Phoenix and Medical Falcon were on hand to explain the job of medical evacuation pilots. They explained how the wounded were loaded onto the helicopter, and even had one of the children strapped to a litter and loaded on.

The third presentation for the kids was a demonstration by the 35th MP Co. "We're demonstrating how the dogs can work for obedience and can be trained to do attack work," said Staff Sgt. Craig Montgomery, 35th MP Co. The children watched with rapt attention as the two German shepherds on command would chase after their would-be target and proceed to lock their teeth around the protective arm guards of the target, holding on until their trainer told them to let go. Following the ferocious show, some of the children were given the opportunity to pet the dogs, allowing them to see that the dogs were only vicious when they were commanded to be.

To finish off the day, the students were taken to the dining facility for lunch. Although their impressions of KFOR and the KPS were already high, they were given an extra boost by an appearance from the Task Force Falcon commanding general, Brig. Gen. Tod J. Carmony. The general greeted each of the visiting youngsters, shaking their hands, answering questions, and at times, encouraging the young guests to eat ice cream. This special event aided in sealing an already special day for the kids.

Activities like this one are a rarity, but there exists hope for further "field trips." "It's important to have the kids know that the KPS, UNMIK, and KFOR are here to help the community," Weidner said.







PHOTO BY SGT. GREIG DAHLKE

Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Ravis from Task Force Falcon G6 shows his determination during an arm wrestling competition against Sgt. Lee Poole.

# Who said the Olympics were over?

*Story by Sgt. Greig Dahlke*

Soldiers from seven different nations came together for a day of fun and good old fashion sports, sharing knowledge and goodwill throughout the day at Camp Sajkovac in Multinational Brigade (Center); the camp is a good distance northwest of Athens, but the Olympic spirit was still the same.

More than 100 peacekeepers from the United States, Sweden, Switzerland, Ireland, and Hungary, responded to the invitation sent by the 5th Czech/Slovak Battle Group to come to their camp and participate in this monthly event.

The multi-national soldiers competed with their international comrades, showing off their speed in a 2.5k race. They tested their hand-eye coordination and techniques in table-tennis, while other soldiers demonstrated teamwork and strategy in soccer. In addition, participants took part in arm-wrestling to see who was the strongest, and tug-o-war teams grasped on to the rope and had an all-out strength competition.

The tug-of-war brought forth the

most fun and laughs from the participants and spectators alike. There were two heavily muscled teams from the host Czech and Slovak battle group. The strongest member of one team got in the face of the



PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. BRANDI SCHIFF

Sgt. 1st Class Howard Trexler, 734th EOD, kicks the ball to his teammate during a soccer game against the Irish team.

strongest from the other team, just like it was a professional wrestling match; then the teams were ordered to grasp onto the rope. In unison, the teams of six yelled out resounding "heave's" and "ho's," with each team member using all the strength in their body to pull the other team across

the fixed line. When it was over, the team that won was the one that worked together, not necessarily the one that yelled the loudest.

When the American team grabbed onto the rope, both Czech teams easily pulled them over the line, as they couldn't match the size or weight of their competition.

However, in a gesture of support watched by all, one of the biggest and most helpful soldiers from one of the Czech teams saw the Americans struggling, and asked one of the American viewers to loan him his Army physical fitness jacket. With the help of this 250-pound mercenary wearing his new Army warm-up, the Americans pulled together and excitedly defeated the more powerful opponent, drawing applause and cheers from the crowd.

When asked what it felt like to be temporarily "drafted" into the U.S. Army, Czech Sgt. Raymund Jedlicka said through an interpreter, "It was for a short time, but it was very special for me."

More important than winning and losing; however, was that the KFOR soldiers





PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. BRANDI SCHIFF

Spc. Nicole "Killer" Killip of JVB, TF Falcon, pulls on the rope with her teammates during the tug-of-war competition at Camp Sajkovac, MNB(C).

got together with others they do not normally see. Before, during, and after the sports, all got to see what their comrades wear, how they compete, and even what they eat. All soldiers seemed to enjoy the company, and gained a new understanding of whom they are serving with.

"In what setting would you see runners from five different countries competing against each other, except for the Olympics?" echoed Capt. John Rivers, Headquarters and Headquarters Company Commander, 37th Brigade Combat Team, Camp Bondsteel. "It strengthens the bond between KFOR elements and allows soldiers to make new friends, and could prove invaluable should the situa-

tion ever require us to come together in a reactionary force."

"Any day I go out of the camp is a good day," said Urs Steinlin, a soldier from the Swiss Army and the fastest runner that day. "Any day I meet some new people and talk to them is a good day."

Spc. Joseph Heaton from the command section of the 37th BCT located at Camp Bondsteel seconded this notion.

"You know, it really didn't matter to me – winning or losing. I think the majority of the people just came out here to have fun and enjoy the day," said Heaton.

Miroslav Jordanek, a priest and lieutenant from the host camp, coordinated

the event. He reiterated the theme that many others sounded throughout the day. "For me, the best part of the day is after the competition when people make a friendly sign of peace, and show that they are friends..."

Finally, with the day's events finished, all emerged victorious for having competed and interacted with the players from the other nations.

All the athletes showed the true meaning of peace, for they came here on different teams and wore different uniforms in the beginning, but left the Czech/Slovak camp wearing a new coat of knowledge and trust, that we are all on the same team.

## Ramadan: Everything You Need to Know

*Holy month means more than just fasting to Kosovo Muslims*

Kosovo Muslims began celebrating the holiday of Ramadan Oct. 15. This mosque in Vitina is an example of sites across Kosovo where Muslims will celebrate their holy month.



PHOTO BY SGT. STEPHEN GROVES

The beginning of the holiday season for the various religious communities of Kosovo starts this month. From mid-October and lasting well into the New Year at different times, the various faiths of Kosovo will celebrate their respective holy days. The three main religions in Kosovo are Islam, Orthodox Christianity, and Roman Catholicism.

Islam may or may not be a religion you are familiar with. The Quran, the Bible and the Torah all call on believers to share a common humanity and dignity. The Quran, the holy book of the Muslims, teaches that "we are all people of the Book" regardless of what faith one belongs to. The word "Allah" does not refer to a separate or different God than the one Christians refer to, it is simply the way one says God in Arabic.

The main messages of the Islamic faith are no different from other faiths. Compassion towards others, living in peace, submission to the will of God, commitment to family, charity for those who are less fortunate, generosity, forgiveness, reconciliation, and humanity are the commitments Islamic followers must make and reaffirm throughout

their lifetime.

The holy month of Ramadan, celebrated by Muslims all over the world, is a 30-day fasting period that marks the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. The Quran tells us that it is during this time that the angel Gabriel appeared to the prophet Mohammad revealing to him the first verses of the Quran. During this period, Muslims voluntarily refrain from eating and drinking, hence the "Fast of Ramadan." By fasting, believers of Islam learn what it means to know the hunger and suffering of those less fortunate than themselves. Through this experience, they are reminded of charity and humility, discipline and worship, kinship and faith, and learn to understand and practice humanity and compassion towards all.

From Oct. 15 to Nov. 13, from sunrise to sunset, Albanian, Turk, Gorani, Bosniac, and Roma Muslims throughout Kosovo, will observe this Islamic holy month of Ramadan. Some stores may close earlier than usual. There will be less people in the cafés and restaurants during the day, and there will be more people going to Mosque. Friends and family will wish each other well,

and many communities will make charitable donations of food to those less fortunate.

The end of the fast is marked by Eid al-Fitr or Fiter Bajram. Throughout Kosovo people will visit one another to share their joy and thanksgiving. Large family celebrations will include great feasts topped off with all sorts of traditional sweets. Throughout the area, friends and family will travel to pay visits to one another. Such visitors and well-wishers will include Catholic and Orthodox friends and neighbors.

Kosovo has gone through a very violent time, and there are still many scars left to heal among these various communities. Each year, as Christians and Muslims celebrate their holiest days, they slowly begin to heal and come together to wish each other well. Let us help them by recognizing and respecting their journey and sharing with them our prayers for a peaceful future for them all. ✪



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cards don't work for all games, so the system isn't the most user-friendly in that regard. The PS2 allows memory card usage for all games, giving the player the freedom to take their data from console to console.

Dielschneider: Very true, my friend. However, I think that we can both agree that the graphics quality on these two systems is nearly identical, the differences being barely noticeable to the untrained eye. But what gets me about the PS2 is that you have to buy an adapter to use more than two controllers, while the Xbox can hook up four right out of the box. What do you say to that?

Blake: I'll give you that, but the four built-in control jacks help make the Xbox one of the more bulky game systems. The PS2 can fit conveniently in a narrow

space horizontally, or with the purchase of the stand, can fit in a vertical space too. The Xbox can only be laid flat, takes up too much space, and is rather heavy.

Dielschneider: True, true, the Xbox is a heavy beast. But surely you can see the beauty of built-in broadband Internet capability. Two Xboxes straight from the store can be connected together using an ordinary Ethernet cable. Or you can use an Ethernet router to plug many Xboxes together for insane multi-player games—some support 16 players or more. Sony's decision to bundle the PS2 with their accessory network adapter was their



The Xbox "S" controller.

way of counteracting this strategic advantage. But let's move on, shall we?

Blake: Sure. How about that controller for the X-Box? Did they have human hands in mind when they designed it? The PS2's controller, a slight variant of the ergonomically designed PlayStation predecessor, allows for comfort and a firm grip when playing and is durable enough to survive being dropped, and I know that from personal experience.

Dielschneider: Again, a matter of preference. I find the new, smaller "S" controller for the Xbox to be the perfect controller



The PS2 controller.

for fast-paced action games. In my opinion, the PS2 controller is a bit too cluttered and the front trigger buttons are less natural to use when speed is the issue, though neither controller is bad when it all comes down to it.

Speaking of games, I have yet to find a game to beat Halo in its genre, not to mention its sequel, Halo 2, due out in a few months. The original Halo was, and still is, a top-rated, best-selling action game only for the Xbox.

Blake: Halo, Halo 2, and Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic, a top-rated role-playing game, do not warrant buying a system on their own merit. While the Xbox has only been around for a couple of years, and many of the games are also available on the PS2, the PS2 definitely has the advantage when it comes to game selection. Not only are their games designed for the PS2, they also support games for the original PlayStation. This means you don't have to throw out your old games when you get a PS2. In fact, I find that PlayStation games play much better on the PS2, making for a more enjoyable experience.

Dielschneider: Well, Sony does have the advantage in the game selection arena, since they've been in the business for about five years longer than Microsoft. But it's important to remember that many of the big hit games, like all the great sports games, are available on both platforms. It's a good idea to see what games are unique to a system before buying.

Blake: In the end, if you're a hardcore gamer, you'll just end up buying both. So it's really up to the individual to decide which they want to spend their money on. And for the Soldiers who are parents here doing some early Christmas shopping, make sure the system has games that suit your child's age group.

Dielschneider: But whichever system you do decide to purchase, just remember to have some fun with it. That's what it's for. ✱

*(The views expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect those of the unit, command, or the United States Army. For informational purposes only: we cannot endorse either product, and the decision is ultimately up to the buyer.)*

## SLEEP (Continued from Page 11)

tening to relaxing music.

Worrying about sleep keeps a lot of people up at night. If you lay down at night and can't stop thinking about how tired you are, and how much you just want to sleep so you won't screw up the mission you've got the next day, you'll never fall asleep. The best thing to do is just clear your mind and relax, which can take a lot of discipline. And don't worry if you don't feel tired—most experts recommend getting up and doing something quiet, like reading, until you start to feel tired again.

The environment you sleep in can affect the quality of your sleep. Sudden sounds, bright light, and other distracting elements can interrupt your sleep before you're ready to get up. It's best to draw your curtains at night and use a fan or other white-noise generators to help drown out extraneous noises.

Diet and exercise can also influence sleep. Don't eat a big meal before going to bed, but if you happen to be hungry, a light snack can be helpful. People who exercise daily usually sleep better than people who only exercise once in a while or not at all.

This is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to sleep advice. If you want more information, check out <http://sleepresearchproject.memphis.edu> and <http://sleep.lifetips.com>, or do a basic search in any internet search engine. ✱



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# Parting Shots



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. AARON SALZER